



Kilcreggan Homes Strategic Plan

2025-28



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Acronyms

ASC - Autistic Spectrum Conditions

BHSCT - Belfast Health & Social Care Trust

BIS - Business Improvement Solutions

CCNI - Charity Commission for Northern Ireland

DoH - Department of Health

HSC - Health & Social Care

LD - Learning Disability

NHSCT- Northern Health & Social Care Trust

NIHE - Northern Ireland Housing Executive

PfG - Programme for Government

RQIA - Regulation & Quality Improvement Authority

SEND - Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

SEHSCT - South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust

SP - Supporting People

SROI - Social Return on Investment

Section 1: Introduction

Kilcreggan Homes Ltd is a voluntary organisation which promotes the social inclusion of adults with a learning disability (LD), and/or autistic spectrum condition (ASC) or an acquired brain injury who are interested in the opportunities on offer. Since the mid-1990s, Kilcreggan Homes¹ have been developing innovative and unique services in response to the needs of their service users, providing an enabling environment for their full and meaningful participation in the community.

From housing and related support, the organisation has extended to create, therapeutic farms, social enterprises, a garden centre and café, volunteering and supported employment opportunities and a visitor attraction used by the local community and visitors to the area. These are accompanied by bespoke support planning for people who require an individualised package of support to help them live independently and achieve their ambitions.

1.1 Governance

Kilcreggan Homes Ltd is an independent company limited by guarantee and a registered charity in compliance with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI). The main charitable objectives of the Company are around its mission to provide quality and appropriate supported living opportunities to empower people with developmental and acquired disabilities to live independently, enhance their skills and participate fully in society.

Kilcreggan Homes Ltd is governed by a Board of Management which meets regularly with the Director in attendance. Membership of the Board is comprised of people with proven and relevant experience in the public, private, voluntary and community sectors across housing, social care, civil service, general medical practice, and community development. The Board sign off on annual reports and accounts and provide support to the Director who oversees the day-to-day operations.

Kilcreggan Homes Ltd currently employs in excess of 75 staff as per the organisational structure illustrated in Figure 1 which was agreed after an organisational review in 2023. It is noteworthy that this review enabled Kilcreggan to segment services in the disciplines of housing, complex needs and day opportunities. New posts were created in Finance, Day Opportunities and Complex Needs to strengthen the management function and provide progression pathways for staff development in line with organisational growth.

¹ For brevity, Kilcreggan Homes will be in the main abbreviated to Kilcreggan in the remainder of this strategic plan.

1.2 Methodology

In February 2025, Kilcreggan commissioned Business Improvement Solutions (BIS) to develop their strategic plan for the period 2025-28. The work to develop this strategy took place in the months of March to May 2025, and the methodology adopted by BIS and codesigned with Kilcreggan to meet the terms of reference included:

- A desk review of existing information and data to develop a deeper understanding of the work of Kilcreggan in the period of their previous strategic plan 2022-25. BIS were granted access to key reports such as “ The Mid Ulster Sanctuary Report, Magherafelt, A Space for Wellbeing”, the Kilcreggan Homes 2023-24 Impact Report, and the 2023 Supporting People Revenue Business Case.
- Formulation of the strategic and policy context which Kilcreggan is currently operating.
- Stakeholder mapping to define the stakeholder’s material to Kilcreggan.
- Design of a consultation framework customised to each stakeholder group to explore perspectives grounded in their knowledge, experience, and expertise.
- Focus group discussion with the Kilcreggan Board, senior management, supervisory management, support staff and 12 people supported onsite in Carrickfergus.
- Consultation with a range of high-level key informants including professionals managing and directing services and supports in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust (NHSCT)² and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE).
- Discussion and analysis of key findings with Kilcreggan Senior Management and Board.
- Design and presentation of the final Strategic Plan.

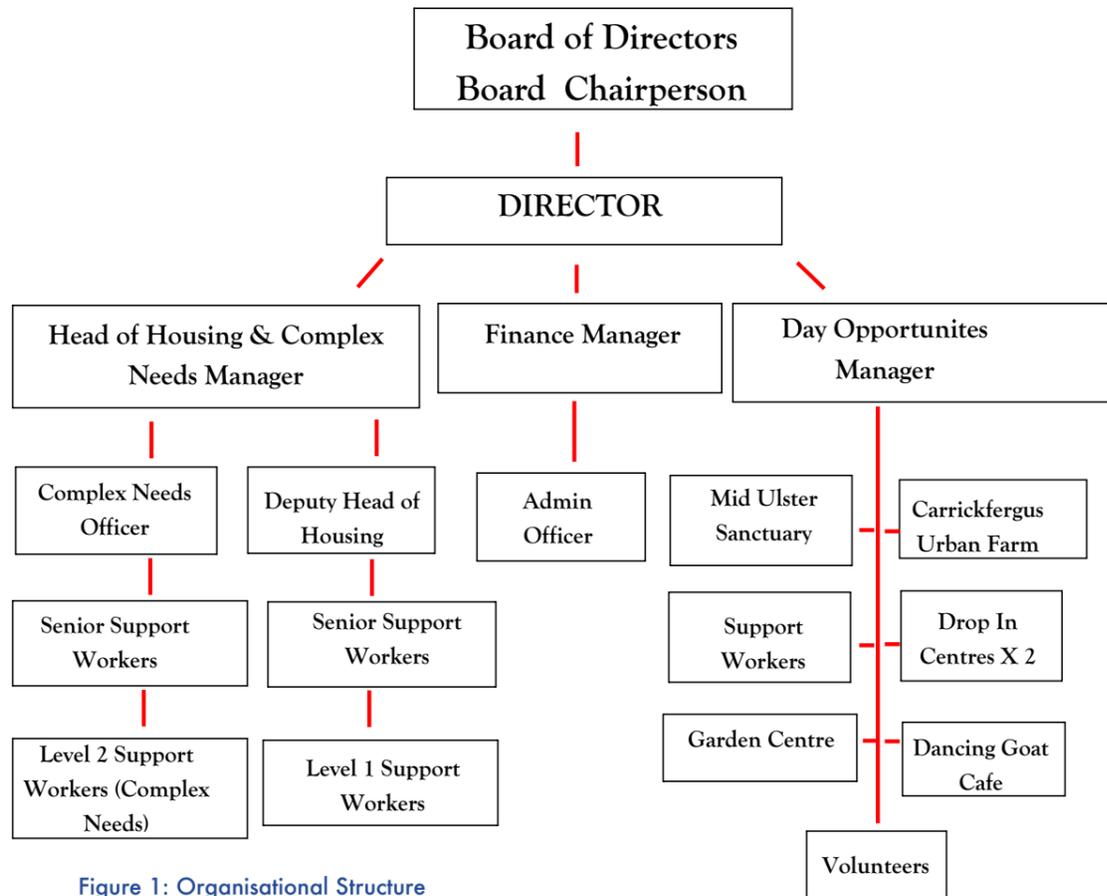


Figure 1: Organisational Structure

Section 2: Kilcreggan Homes Services

This section sets out a description of the services and facilities offered by Kilcreggan.

2.1 Housing & Complex Needs

The Kilcreggan Housing model is based on an innovative mix of privately purchased and built accommodation in partnership with the NHSCT, BHSCT and the SEHSCT and housing provided in partnership with Choice Housing Association which is funded by the NIHE's Supporting People' programme. This strategy has been highly successful in ensuring the financial sustainability and growth of Kilcreggan. Given the success of the privately purchased properties and the demand presenting from Health and Social Care Trusts, It is anticipated that Kilcreggan will purchase further properties over the next three years.

Through the model, Kilcreggan currently supports twenty-five tenants with Complex Needs (Learning Disability, Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC) or Acquired Brain Injury). Every tenant has a unique person-centred support plan tailored to help individuals live as independently as they can with control of their life and opportunities to develop skills, relationships, communication, and confidence to lead a fulfilling life in their community.

Kilcreggan works with service users, their families, carers, and professionals to help achieve a comprehensive support and care plan for each tenant. The privately purchased houses are for the more complex needs requiring 1-1 or 2-1 support and supervision.

2.1.1 Pipeline Developments

A business case in partnership with the Northern & Belfast HSC Trust and Choice Housing Association was submitted to the NIHE in September 2023 for capital funding for six bungalows, additional staff offices and a training unit for staff. It is expected that this build will commence during this new strategic plan cycle 2025-28. The bungalows will be ear marked for clients from the BHSCT and the NHSCT both of whom have pledged commitments to fund the revenue costs.

In response to an expression of interest request from the NHSCT for a specialist respite service to cater for the twenty-four families who have a son/daughter with complex needs & behaviours of concern, residing in the Glens & Causeway Council area, Kilcreggan have purchased five acres at 6 Tullaghore Road, Ballymoney. It is expected that this build could be completed by 2027 and will be registered by the Regulation & Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) under Residential Standards.



2.2 Day Opportunities

Kilreggan provide day opportunities through the following.

2.2.1 Carrickfergus Urban Farm & Garden Centre

The Carrickfergus Urban Farm and Garden Centre at Kilreggan is a popular attraction to local families and visitors from Northern Ireland and beyond. The farm evolved through an idea from one of Kilreggan's tenants who loved animals and knew that spending time caring for animals and with nature improved their quality of life. This precipitated the creation of a community space comprising the farm and garden where service users could engage in therapeutic activities and demonstrate their skills, passion, and knowledge for what they do.

The farm provides day opportunities and volunteering opportunities to Kilreggan tenants and continues to develop its potential to offer this service to clients who reside in the community and purchase day opportunity placements through a direct payment. The garden centre has two full-time qualified horticulturalists and a part time employed service user alongside several volunteers with sales and range of stock increasing apace

Community based clients can access the farm through Direct Payments. This means that the client can purchase on a daily or weekly basis the service and activities that they choose whilst attending the farm. This offers clients based in the community the services that they want, and which are best suited to their needs. The farm has clients who have opted to attend on a weekly basis or as an integrated service attending on chosen days.

The Base project in Carrickfergus and Larne is a flagship example of Kilreggan's innovative day opportunities, in the heart of the local community. Developed in partnership with the NHSCT in Carrickfergus and Larne. The facilities enhance community-based day services for adults with learning disabilities in line with the Trust's Day Opportunities strategy. The Base has many links to the local community through workshops and classes that are happening in Carrickfergus and Larne. Access is by referral from the NHSCT Day Opportunities Co-Ordinator.



2.2.2 Mid Ulster Sanctuary

This is a partnership with the NHSCT to offer day opportunities to service users who have been using traditional building-based services and are displaying challenging behaviours or have been unable to access traditional day services. The service continues to increase its daily numbers and with the introduction of AM & PM sessions each day has a capacity of 20 spaces.

This beautifully manicured site enables service users with Learning Disabilities and Autism to spend their day in a therapeutic farm setting. They look after deer, lama, donkeys, pigs, geese, chickens, hens, goats, rabbits, guinea pigs and a pony. They spend their day doing, food preparation, feeding the animals, animal care and ground maintenance in a safe and enjoyable working environment. A new bird aviary is expected to be opened in 2025.

The sanctuary is open five days a week and is resourced by Kilreggan staff and local volunteers. Findings from research commissioned by Kilreggan Homes and conducted by Ulster University on the benefits of the Mid Ulster Sanctuary indicate that service users are accessing much needed life-enhancing opportunities which are improving their wellbeing, communication skills, confidence, self-esteem, self-care, and facilitating new relationships. The therapeutic benefits of open space and small animal care are positive and important contributors to meeting the needs of service users.

The model of delivery for day opportunities championed by Kilreggan for over twenty years presents new and innovative options that offers service users alternatives to traditional buildings-based day care and supports their integration into the community. This is crucial to improving their quality of life and reducing social inequalities.

2.3 Dancing Goat Cafe

Dancing Goat Café is set in the grounds of Carrickfergus Urban Farm and Garden Centre at Kilreggan serving savoury and sweet treats, salads, soups, and sandwiches. It provides employment and volunteer opportunities for our tenants & service users. All profits made in the Dancing Goat Café goes straight back into projects in Kilreggan promoting and developing work to support adults with learning disabilities and/or autism and acquired brain injury. Under the leadership of a recently appointed manager, footfall, revenue and profitability has increased in the last financial year.



2.4 Funding Model

Kilreggan’s funding model is presented in Table 1

| Service/Enterprise | Funder |
|---|---|
| Housing Support to tenants | Supporting People |
| Independent Living Opportunities | Supporting People/Direct Payments/ Self Directed Support |
| Direct care provision to adults with SLD/ASC and associated complex needs | NHSCT/BHSCT, SEHSCT |
| Floating Support Services to assist service users to secure and maintain their tenancies | Direct Payments through HSCT’s |
| Base: Contracted delivery of social and recreational opportunities for people who are not engaged with mainstream day care services | NHSCT |
| Mid Ulster Sanctuary: Day opportunities on a therapeutic farm | NHSCT |
| Coffee Shop | Social Enterprise |
| Urban Farm | Direct Payments/HSCT/Social Enterprise |
| Garden Centre | Social Enterprise |
| Acquisition of Private Properties | Organisational profits used to purchase properties and revenue income used to pay mortgages |

Table 1: Kilreggan Homes – Funding Model

The application of this funding model generated an operational surplus of £82,065 in Kilreggan’s 2023-24 accounts. Given the Board’s organic growth strategy, both turnover and operating surplus are expected to increase year on year, with the surplus used in line with the organisation’s charitable objectives. The Board have established a sinking fund reserve setting aside provision for future capital renewal of its property portfolio and a capital donations fund representing the value of assets transferred to the company through donations.

2.4.1 Supporting People Funding

While the overall organisational financial outlook is positive, one area of concern is the funding contract for 17 tenants from the Supporting People programme which has been in deficit for some time.

- There has been no real increase or inflationary uplifts in funding from SP since 2008.
- A 5% cut to the sector was applied on 1st April 2018.
- The 5.2% cut was reinstated in 2021 bringing the funding back to the level it was in 2008.
- During the period since 2008, Kilreggan has been exposed to significant pressures from the increase in the minimum wage, lower threshold of employers national insurance, utilities and cost of living.

Consequently by today’s accounting figures, this means Kilreggan are operating a programme that has significant reduced funding from 2008, whilst being expected to deliver the same outcomes. Kilreggan have been successful in discussions with the Northern HSC Trust to identify funding to address this deficit that will continue to increase since there is no indication of any uplifts from the Housing Executive during this new strategic plan cycle 2025-28.



Section 3: Strategic Context

This section sets out the strategic and policy context that currently shapes and will continue to influence the operating environment of Kilcreggan over the next three years.

3.1 Health and Wellbeing 2026 - Delivering Together

In October 2016, a 10-year approach to transforming health and social care was launched, "Health and Wellbeing 2026: Delivering Together". This ambitious plan was the response to the report produced by an Expert Panel led by Professor Bengoa tasked with considering the best configuration of Health and Social Care Services in Northern Ireland.

"Delivering Together' presents a vision of transformed Health and Social Care services which are person-centered, and focus on prevention, early intervention, supporting independence and wellbeing and is aligned to the strategic direction of the Department of Health report on Adult Care and Support Power to the People"

A new Learning Disability Model for Northern Ireland which Kilcreggan contributed to is currently (May 2025) out for final consultation . It will reset traditional day opportunities with an increasing priority for outreach to innovative community day services such as the Base and the Mid Ulster Sanctuary.

3.2 Supporting People (SP) Programme

A review of the SP Programme in November 2015 resulted in 13 recommendations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the programme, one method of achieving this is through meeting current and future housing support needs by increasing the proportion of floating support to allow clients to remain living independently in their own homes.

The recommendations relating to needs assessment across all client groups, standardised regional payments, the revising of the current commissioning structure and the piloting of competitive tendering are relevant to Kilcreggan. It must be acknowledged that SP funding has reduced significantly since 2008 including a 5% reduction in 2018 with little new revenue funding available for providers such as Kilcreggan. The 2025-28 draft budget from the Department of Finance does include any uplifts for SP.

3.3 The Programme for Government 2024-27

The Northern Ireland Executive's Programme for Government 2024–2027 – Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most presents a refreshed strategic direction centred on inclusive growth, public sector reform, and improved wellbeing. Several commitments outlined in the PFG are relevant to Kilreggan. The Executive has reaffirmed its commitment to:

- Providing more social, affordable, and sustainable housing, with a target to start 5,850 new social homes by 2027 and increased investment in housing for vulnerable groups, including those with disabilities. This focus aligns closely with Kilreggan's supported living expansion plans in Carrickfergus and Ballymoney.
- Reforming and transforming public services, supported by a £235 million Transformation Fund. The PFG highlights a shift toward integrated, community-based care models—an approach Kilreggan already exemplifies through its blended model of housing, person centred supports, therapeutic day services, and social enterprise.
- Supporting people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), committing to an Executive-agreed SEN Reform Agenda and improved transitions for young people leaving school. This emphasis on post-16/19 support underscores the continued need for tailored adult services like those Kilreggan provides, especially for individuals who do not engage with mainstream day opportunities.

3.4 Interim Autism Strategy

The interim Autism Strategy sets out priorities for action with the focussed aim of improving the lives of people with autism, their families, and carers by enhancing access to service provision and support, increasing understanding of their specific needs, and strengthening partnership working within communities.

The Strategy seeks to demonstrate a societal commitment to supporting and understanding the needs of autistic people, their families, and carers. It will also be used to inform comprehensive planning of service provision across the wider public sector and partnerships beyond, and for anyone with a role to play in leading and implementing change with the aim of improving outcomes for autistic people, their families, and carers.

The Strategy commits to working in partnership to facilitate and deliver high quality housing support and promote independent living. Furthermore, it pledges to provide opportunities to support autistic people and their families to experience greater social interaction and activity in an accessible way that will connect them to their community. It is framed around three strategic outcomes.

3.4.1 Strategic Outcome 1

A healthy life with access to services on an equal and timely basis.

We will provide improved pathways of care enabling timely access to early intervention and support which best meets emotional and wellbeing needs for individuals and families.

3.4.2 Strategic Outcome 2

A life with opportunities to live as an active citizen.

We will support autistic people, their families and carers as they participate in all aspects of community and society through continued support in education and employment and as they transition throughout life stages.

3.4.3 Strategic Outcome 3

An independent life supported by greater societal understanding and choices.

We will provide opportunity for autistic people to live safe and independent lives within our communities and have equal access to services where they are met with respect and understanding.

3.5 Reform of Adult Social Care

The Department of Health (DoH) is leading a programme of work on service improvement and the delivery of transformation in Health and Social Care. The proposals to reform adult social care sit within this broader framework of improvement and transformation. To support the adult social care reform programme, the DoH has established a Social Care Collaborative Forum to provide vision, along with strategic advice and guidance on social care, and take forward agreed actions to support improvement and transformation. The Collaborative Forum's Delivery Plan for 2025 is focused on the following areas.



Figure 2: Collaborative Forum Service Delivery Plan 2025

The Workforce Workstream includes a number of headline actions relevant to Kilcreggan namely;

1. Publish and commence implementation of the Social Care Workforce Strategy.
2. Develop and publish the Social Care Career Pathways and Continuous Learning Framework.
3. Consider options for increasing international recruitment.

The Supported Living Workstream includes actions relevant to Kilcreggan namely;

1. Develop an evidence-based review of findings from supported living research.
2. Map existing services commissioned by HSC and Supporting People to consider reach, funding, impact and best practice.
3. Develop a shared definition for Supported Living.
4. Clarify the boundaries and interdependencies between tasks relating to personal care support and housing related support.

Section 4: Stakeholder Engagement

To facilitate input into this strategic plan and ensure it evolves in line with the local and regional policy and strategy, an extensive consultation process was undertaken.

4.1 Introduction

These engagements involved focus group discussions with board members and staff and individual semi-structured interviews with professionals managing and directing disability and supported living services and supports in the NHSCT and the NIHE. To inform the scope and content of the consultation, a stakeholder analysis was developed which is set out in Figure 3.

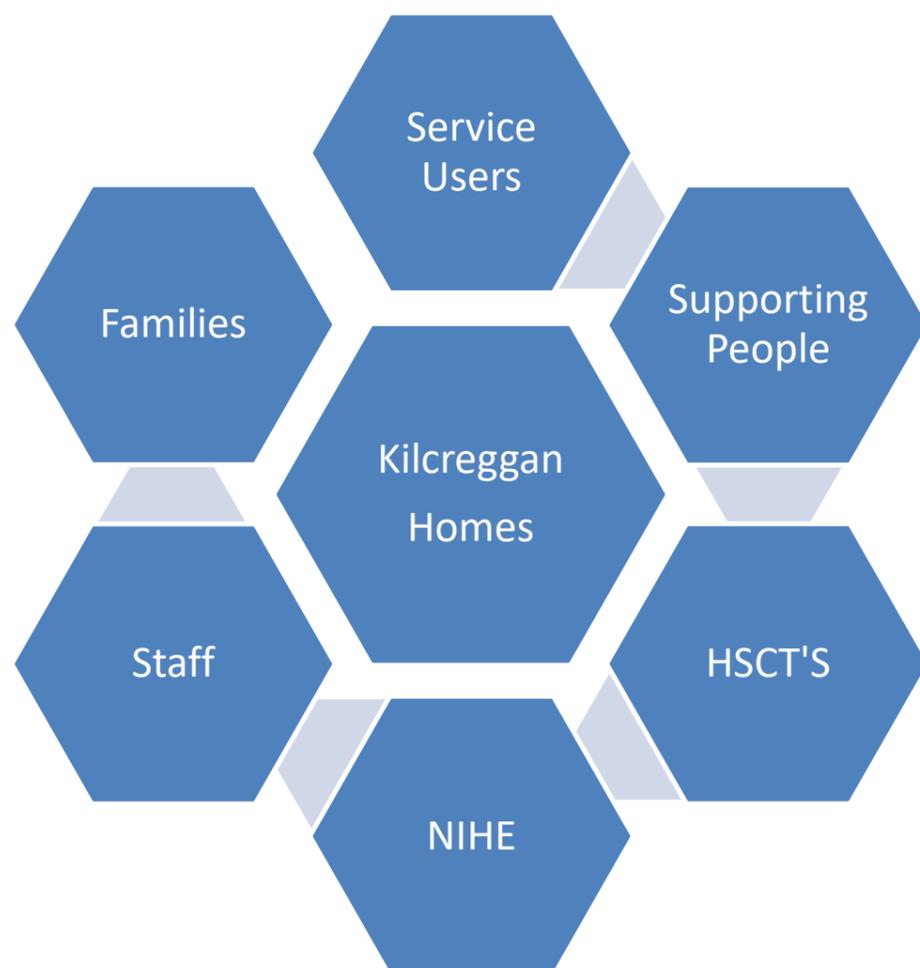


Figure 3: Kilcreggan Homes Stakeholder Analysis

The following section presents a thematic overview of the consultation findings grouped around the responses to several key questions namely.

- Review of the 2022-25 strategic plan; what has worked well? And what have been the challenges.
- What are the current internal issues for Kilcreggan Homes and what should be the response?
- What are the current critical external factors to which Kilcreggan should respond?
- What does Kilcreggan want to achieve in the current environment?
- How can Kilcreggan position itself to meet emerging need?
- What are the unique features of the services and facilities that Kilcreggan offer?
- Where does Kilcreggan add most value in the current service delivery landscape?
- Do Kilcreggan need to develop new strategic alliances and partnerships and if so who with?
- What is the architecture Kilcreggan will need to implement the plan (governance, corporate services, contracts, service level agreements)?
- Big Ticket Items – identifying the five/six most important decisions/challenges, developments for Kilcreggan over the next three years.

4.2 Review of 2022-25 Strategic Plan

This sections sets out a review of the 2022-25 strategic plan framed around stakeholder feedback.

All service level agreements indicators and targets have been consistently met in the past three years. Kilcreggan have had successful inspections from the Regulation Quality Inspection Authority (RQIA) and Supporting People (Northern Ireland Housing Executive) during this period. All contractual reporting requirements are met in relation to safeguarding.

Kilcreggan have continued to increase their supported living capacity through partnership with HSCT's and as landlords of community-based housing in Carrickfergus, Magherafelt, Ballymoney and Newtownabbey. This has been achieved within the context of a sound financial model which has secured year on year surpluses for reinvestment.

The complexity of need of presenting clients has increased with increasing requirement for 24-hour care and support. In addition to supporting people with learning disabilities and acquired brain injury, there is now a clear focus on supporting people with Autism. In recognition of their work, Kilcreggan won The Great Autism Award in 2023 at the NI Learning Disability & Autism Awards.

Kilcreggan retain a strong commitment to service development based on principles of needs led design and user involvement. They are prepared to search for solutions and seize opportunities to find better ways of meeting the needs of the people who use their services or who may do so in the future.

The increased capacity achieved over recent years has resulted in greater demands on and for staff. Recruitment and retention of staff in Kilcreggan remains challenging as it is across the social care sector. It presents the greatest barrier to planning for growth to meet the continued upsurge in demand for suitable accommodation for Kilcreggan's target group. To ensure Kilcreggan Homes can source the staff required to deliver their services they have applied to the Home Office to acquire sponsorship for employing foreign nationals already based in the UK. It is envisaged that this method of recruiting staff will continue for as long as Government policy allows. The unemployment rate in Northern Ireland fell to 1.8% this year.

There was significant investment in staff training in the previous strategic plan cycle. Staff have undertaken a range of academic and vocational qualifications alongside CPD courses and activities in this period. Kilcreggan are collaborating with ARC NI on training and capacity building initiatives in complex needs. Kilcreggan are well positioned to be leading in the sector in delivery training for this cohort.

An independent review of the Management structure was completed in 2022 precipitating the introduction of the new organisational structure as per Figure 1. This will ensure that Kilcreggan has the capacity and infrastructure to deliver the 2025-28 strategic plan. The Kilcreggan website effectively conveys the key messages in a way that is accessible and meaningful to not only people who access the service, but also to stakeholders and society at large. This is part of an emerging marketing strategy to include increased social media profile and customer engagement.



4.3 Innovative and Entrepreneurial

The consensus among all stakeholders was that Kilcreggan should continue to pursue a growth agenda during this strategic plan cycle. Feedback from the NHSCT indicates that demand for quality supported living will increase in the coming years. Contributors consistently referred to the innovative and entrepreneurial model adopted by Kilcreggan to increase capacity in the provision of housing and support to people with complex needs.

The business case for the development of six new bungalows onsite at Kilcreggan where the capital funding can be accessed through the Social Housing Development Programme within the NIHE with the NHSCT & BHSCT providing 100% of the revenue funding is a cogent example of innovation. This negates any reliance on Supporting People funding where there are already deficits which have been offset to some extent by the NHSCT though this is not guaranteed in the future.

The NIHE capital/HSCT revenue funding model potentially provides opportunities to purchase sites in the future which could be developed using a similar business case. However it was highlighted that the case for NIHE capital funding is enhanced by Kilcreggan being an existing SP site which should be explored further in advance of any future site purchase.

In terms of the growth agenda, It is important to note that Kilcreggan receive regular requests and referrals for housing and support for complex needs from across Northern Ireland and not just the HSCT areas where they are already established. The level of demand evident from such consistent referrals strengthens the case for Kilcreggan to purchase further properties in the new strategic plan cycle.

Kilcreggan are recognised as providing an excellent service and have acquired a reputation for specialist housing support for people with complex needs. Findings from research commissioned conducted by Ulster University on the benefits of the Mid Ulster Sanctuary enhance the evidence base on the impact of Kilcreggan's services.

The Day Care provision through Base facilities in Carrickfergus and Larne and the Mid Ulster Sanctuary commissioned by the NHSCT are an integral part of the Trust's delivery against the requirements of their modernisation of day opportunities programme. Contributors felt that having services in the mid Ulster area was strategically significant for Kilcreggan as this is an area of high need within the NHSCT.

4.4 Profiling of Need

This subsection profiles the need based on HSCT engagement and desk review.

4.4.1 NHSCT

In the NHSCT, there are circa 85 people awaiting supported living placements. The demand is particularly high in Mid Ulster to the extent that if Kilreggan were to acquire a site in the area, then the NHSCT would commit to funding the care and support similar to their commitment to do so for the 6 new bungalows at Kilreggan.

NHSCT professionals highlighted that the complexity of need is increasing and that the lines between residential and supported living for complex needs are becoming increasingly blurred. In terms of day care, most of the NHSCT Adult Centres are at full capacity with acute need for day opportunities in Ballymena and Mid Ulster. Ballymena is an area where need has intensified both for supported living and day care opportunities.

Looking at the pipeline for future need and demand in the NHSCT, each year approximately 35 children transition from the Child Disability Teams to the Adult Learning Disability (LD) Teams across the Trust. In addition to these young people transferring the Adult LD teams may also receive referrals for support from people moving into the area or from families where the young person attended special school but was not previously on the Child Disability Team caseloads, as their needs were being met via educational resources.

Reviewing the number of clients open to the Adult LD social work caseloads in the NHSCT for those aged 20-24 (5 years) in the East Antrim locality; this averages out at approximately 17-18 new adult clients each year in East Antrim; the majority of these coming from a community setting.

4.4.2 BHSCT

In December 2022, the Trust’s Learning Disability Programme presented an overview of the projected need for the subsequent five years to providers. The Trust segmented their needs into four categories of care, the numbers within each whose needs currently cannot be met by the BHSCT and the projected need in each category over the next five years. This is presented in Table 2.

| Category of Need | Current Unmet Need | Need over next five years |
|--|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Very Complex 2:1 staffing plus | 12 | 10 |
| Complex 1:1 staffing | 4 | 14 |
| Less Complex: Access to 24-hour staffing | 14 | 83 |
| Forensic/ Addictions Category of Care | 10 | 8 ³ |

Table 2: BHSCT – Profile of Need

³ This figure does not include those in the judicial system who will be released in the next 5 years

The accommodation options required to meet current and future need will include.

- Single Occupancy
- Single Occupancy Core and Cluster with communal space – maximum 5/6 service users
- Outside space for the Very Complex Category of Care
- Small shared accommodation with communal space
- Options for couples to share accommodation

The highest level of demand projected over the next five years will be in the Less Complex Access to 24-hour staffing category. One of the key Trust criteria for this category is the provision of a meaningful day time activity schedule which Kilreggan are well positioned to deliver given the range of options that they offer. Kilreggan are developing their own formal assessment process to ensure that prospective clients/tenants are the best fit.

4.5 Infrastructure

Kilreggan’s Board of Management comprises the chairperson, vice chairperson, treasurer, company secretary and board members. The role of the Board is to oversee the work of the Director and the following functions: Governance, Policy Development, Supervision and Support, Finance and Administration Systems and Human Resources and Industrial Relations.

In addition to the recruitment and retention, issues identified during the consultations with staff included limited office space. The capital development on the existing site in Kilreggan will include additional office space and a training unit for staff and tenants.

Kilreggan has grown significantly over the past 3-5 years and this is projected to continue in the new strategic plan cycle in Supported Living, Respite, geographically in Mid Ulster and further one-off commissions for people with complex needs. As Kilreggan’s portfolio increases in scale and complexity the board highlighted the need for ongoing review of organisational structures to include succession planning.

4.6 Positioning

Kilreggan currently support people with a Learning Disability, Brain Injury or Autism. Stakeholders felt that Kilreggan have adapted their service delivery model effectively to meet such multi-faceted needs. It was felt that Kilreggan should continue to position itself as a provider that can consistently meet complex needs. This is a niche area that is much in demand in all HSCT areas and is vital to their discharge and resettlement strategies.

4.7 Social Impact

Evidencing and proving the difference that interventions are making is always challenging for community-based services. Funders are increasingly looking for metrics that demonstrate the impact that services are having on stakeholders and beneficiaries. Public Sector procurement of services will increasingly reflect the Programme for Government's focus on outcomes and the capacity to demonstrate that public money is being used effectively to improve the lives of the people in a tangible, measurable way.

Services will need to be designed around delivering and evidencing outcomes and being able to prove the positive impact that they make, whilst ensuring value for money. As a social enterprise, Kilreggan should seek to introduce some form of social impact measurement to capture the social impact and outcomes accrued for all stakeholders. Methodologies such as Social Return on Investment (SROI) may identify value for stakeholders that are not currently contributing to the funding of services.

It could serve to strengthen funding applications to a more diverse set of funders across the statutory and voluntary sectors. Exemplar outcomes may include the contribution of Kilreggan in improving the quality of life of clients and reducing costs for HSCT's. Where this is evidenced, a financial proxy could be assigned to demonstrate the cost saving to the relevant government department.

Showcasing how a service or project is delivering social value for the community can also be a catalyst for successful fundraising events and applications. Findings from research undertaken by Ulster University based on a sample of service users in the Mid Ulster Sanctuary confirm the benefits of therapeutic farming and this could be a valuable evidence base for any future SROI analysis.

A taster for a social impact study could be to explore the social value generated through the package of support delivered to the most complex case in Kilreggan. This could segment the social value per funding input i.e. HSCT, SP, Direct Payments and Self Directed Support.

4.8 Safeguarding

Kilreggan continues to create a safe and supportive environment for our tenants and service users in relation to keeping adults safe. Tenants and service users are supported through the provision of advice and support to recognise when they may be experiencing harm or potential abuse and seek support to prevent harm happening. The majority of safeguarding interventions in Kilreggan services are aimed at preventative work, staff are suitably trained to recognise risk of harm and abuse and make early intervention, when required staff also have clear and available support and guidance to respond effectively to concerns of harm or abuse.

All staff are trained at Level 2 and or 3 in relation to Safeguarding Adults with a strong well embedded rights- based approach adopted and a strong open communication culture exists where complexities of safeguarding can be explored by all staff.

4.9 Tenant Views

Consultation with tenants involved a desk review of the 19 tenant responses to the 2023-24 tenant survey and a focus group discussion onsite at Kilreggan with 12 tenants.

- 95% liked the flat/house that they lived in, with some highlighting the lack of stairs to climb as a positive. One respondent did voice that *"it was too big"*
- 95% felt they were getting enough support to keep their home clean and tidy, with some referencing that whilst they do enjoy the independent cleaning capabilities afforded to them, they can still ask for support as and when needed.
- All respondents were happy with the daily support they receive, although one did highlight, they would *"like the carers to come earlier"*.
- Whilst 95% of respondents felt they got support to resolve issues with other Kilreggan tenants, one respondent did outline that *"staff will resolve issues"*
- 95% of respondents feel safe in Kilreggan, with particular reference to the safety that the staff presence ensures.
- Respondents thoroughly enjoy the work and day opportunities – with 95% outlining this and some respondents even expressing the desire to work more hours. Respondents particularly enjoyed working in the café.
- 84% of respondents felt they have a say in changes that happen in Kilreggan; with some stating that they are always listened to with one respondent indicating *"I feel in control of my support, if I want to do something different, I can."*
- Regarding respondents' ideas for changes to make life better at Kilreggan: whilst many outlined they *"wouldn't change anything"*; some respondents have wishes for more social events and group activities, with one respondent in particular exclaiming that they *"would like to visit America"*.

The following SWOT Analysis is based on the findings from desk research and the stakeholder engagement.

Section 5: SWOT Analysis

| | |
|--|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven track record of delivery • Innovative & Entrepreneurial • Committed & expert staff and Board who are ambitious and enthusiastic about Kilcreggan’s work • Services & facilities and the range of needs that they meet • Trusted by funders & stakeholders. • Values • Flexible & responsive to need • Established partnerships • Robust financial model • A niche provider for complex Autism and 24-hour care and support | <p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff recruitment and retention • Service User Involvement • Kilcreggan brand does not reflect the scale and scope of expansion and service delivery in other areas |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop capacity through private purchases and new builds • For expansion in Mid Ulster and other parts of NI • To demonstrate the social value of Kilcreggan’s services • To optimize Digitilisation and SMART technology • To identify new strategic alliances and partnerships • To take the lead on environmental issues. • To recruit new Board members • To lead out on training for supporting people with Autism | <p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being too ambitious • Lack of progression opportunities for more complex clients • Losing staff • Insufficient capacity to meet demand • Adequate resourcing. • Innovation inhibited by funder guidelines and skills deficit • Resistance to change, inertia • Competitors • Increase in minimum salary for employing foreign nationals • Government policy increasing regulation in respect of employing foreign nationals |

Having analysed the findings from the area profile, strategic context, stakeholder engagement and the SWOT Analysis, this section will set out Kilcreggan Homes strategic plan for the period 2025-28.

Our Vision

A society in which people with developmental and acquired disabilities and autism live fulfilling lives.

Our Mission

To provide quality and appropriate opportunities to empower the people we support to live independently, enhance their skills, and participate fully in society.

Our Values

| | | |
|----------|-----------------------|--|
| P | Partnership | We are committed to ensuring that our services are developed in partnership. We work best in active collaboration with our service users, staff, and partners. |
| R | Respect | We will guarantee that respect is at the centre of high-quality, person-centred support and our services will be delivered with dignity, care, and compassion. |
| E | Equality | We recognise the importance of a diverse and inclusive community, and we will strive to ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to make a contribution which is valued. |
| P | Prudence | We will be prudent in financial management, ensuring that we provide value for all stakeholders. |
| A | Accountability | We will be open & transparent in everything we do. |
| R | Resilience | We are forward thinking and resilient organisation and view difficult situations as an opportunity. We will support each other to ensure we have the individual and collective strength to achieve this. |
| E | Excellence | We will continually improve our organisation and our people. We believe in ensuring that everyone involved within our organisation can achieve their full potential. |
| D | Diversity | We will embrace the diversity of the people, environment, and communities in which we work. |

Section 6: Strategic Plan 2025-28

6.1 Strategic Priorities

The data collated during the desk top review and stakeholder consultation has facilitated a clear understanding of the strategic priorities while the policy context has helped to shape Kilcreggan's direction in response to a changing operational environment. The five strategic priority areas reflect a commitment to, excellence in service delivery, sustainability, being responsive to current and emerging need, increasing the influence and awareness of Kilcreggan and being a responsible and supportive employer.

The following section outlines the success indicators and specific actions to be delivered to achieve each of the five strategic priorities. From this, the Kilcreggan team should develop an annual operational plan based on the actions and indicators included for each priority area. This will detail all performance targets, and the staff leads and resources required. Progress towards achieving targets will be reported on monthly to the Kilcreggan Board using the traffic light reporting template.

Many of the actions are a continuation of business as usual, these are the things stakeholders have told us are working well. Some of the actions and initiatives are new and reflect the aspiration to enhance Kilcreggan's services, be more accessible, be accountable, report on impact and achieve a sustainable funding model. The context within which the plan is implemented will change and evolve over the course of its three-year lifespan, thus actions are focused primarily on Year 1 with annual work planning, review and updates built into the plan.

Strategic Priority Area 1 Governance and Operations

Key Performance Indicators

- Kilcreggan's governance is compliant with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's (CCNI) Governance Code.
- Services meet all requirements of funders and regulators (Supporting People, Regulation & Quality Improvement Authority and HSCT's)
- Robust policies, procedures and systems are in place to govern excellence in service delivery.
- As a company limited by guarantee, Kilcreggan meets its reporting requirements to Companies House.
- The Kilcreggan Board has the necessary skills and capacity to govern the 2025-28 strategic plan.

Key Actions

- Kilcreggan's reporting to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI) is submitted as per schedule.
- In preparation for potential audit visits/inspections by CCNI, SP and RQIA, internal audits should be undertaken on an annual basis with any non-conformities identified and actioned.
- A review of Board effectiveness will be undertaken on an annual basis in line with the CCNI principles of Good Governance.
- All policies and procedures are reviewed on an annual basis.
- Ensure robust Safeguarding policies are in place.

Strategic Priority Area 2 Services and facilities

Key Performance Indicators

- Year on year increase in the number of service users accessing Kilcreggan's services.
- Additional capacity created by Kilcreggan.
- Achievement of quality standards.
- Outcomes achieved for service users.

Key Actions

- New builds of six units on the existing Kilcreggan and Ballymoney sites are completed.
- Explore further site acquisition potential based on the NIHE capital and HSCT revenue funding model.
- Build an outcomes framework through evidence from research, evaluation, case studies, i-planit on how services are making a difference to people lives.
- Kilcreggan to consult regularly with service users to measure levels of satisfaction and impact.
- Utilise existing data collection systems to consider the needs of service users and to support organisational decision-making and strategy.
- Collaborate with local Environmental Groups to identify and progress environmental initiatives in Kilcreggan.
- Consult with service users on co-design and production of services.
- Develop a strategy for Service User Involvement by the end of 2025 to map out how (SUI) will be managed and resourced up to the end of 2028.
- Host at least one event per year to engage, service users, their families, the wider population of people with learning disabilities and members of the local public.
- Network and engage with schools and young people's services to profile future demand for services.

Strategic Priority Area 3 Sustainability

Success Indicators

- Achieve all targets as per Service Level/ Funding Agreements with all respective funders.
- Services delivered within budget.
- Increased restricted and unrestricted funding secured.
- Ensure an annual budget surplus and that sufficient level of financial reserves are in place.

Key Actions

- Meet all targets relating to Service Level/Funding Agreements.
- Implement efficiency savings initiatives where necessary.
- Ensure an effective risk management system.
- Explore the potential for charitable and philanthropic funding and identify at least one other viable new funding source per year.
- Develop a case for support to approach local businesses and employers under their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) theme.
- Consider using Social Return on Investment (SROI) to demonstrate the value of services for all stakeholders.
- Ensure budgets are in place and progress against target reported to the Kilcreggan Board monthly.
- Continue to monitor SP deficits and should it continue, develop criteria where Kilcreggan may opt to seek alternatives to SP funding.
- Keep abreast of changing funder requirements.
- Purchase additional properties when deemed prudent by the Board.

Strategic Priority Area 4 Influence and awareness

Success Indicators

- Increased footfall.
- Website traffic.
- Social Media traffic.
- Number of staff who are social media trained and competent.
- Google Analytics.
- Articles in external publications.
- Number of presentations/talks delivered by Kilcreggan personnel.
- New partners.

Key Actions

- Continue to build the brand and identity of Kilcreggan.
- Promotion should differentiate the needs (Learning Disability, Brain Injury, Autism) supported to provide further definition on the Kilcreggan Model.
- Actively promote Kilcreggan’s services to influence change and secure resources.
- Use the findings from research undertaken by Ulster University on the benefits of therapeutic farming to position Kilcreggan as a niche provider.
- Consider the creation of Ambassador roles to promote Kilcreggan in the community.
- Invite the community to the launch of the Kilcreggan strategic plan 2025-28.
- Review representation on forums and groups to ensure that it is strategic and provides the most effective insights into local need.
- Engage in partnerships, collaborations and alliances that add value.

Strategic Priority Area 5 Staff

Success Indicators

- Number of staff employed.
- Retention of existing staff.
- Recruitment of new staff.
- Qualifications and competencies of staff.
- Staff morale and satisfaction.
- Health & safety assessment outcomes.
- Managing the performance, training, and development of staff & volunteers in line with the Investors in People Standard.
- Defined management and support structure.

Key Actions

- Ongoing appraisal of organisational structure to ensure Kilcreggan can anticipate and respond to scale and complexity of growth and development.
- Ensure continued access to professional development opportunities for all staff.
- Staff training budgets in place.
- Undertake an annual staff survey and respond accordingly to findings.
- Implement accredited in-house training programmes for staff.
- Develop bespoke training programmes to meet the competencies required to support people with learning disabilities, brain injury and Autism.
- Develop individual development plans for all staff to support service delivery.
- Conduct annual health & safety assessment to ensure a safe and supportive working environment.
- Ensure staff have access to regular supervision and annual appraisal of performance.
- Develop well-being programme for the staff teams.
- Ensure Kilcreggan Director is effectively supported by the Board.
- Develop a volunteer strategy.
- Monitor, respond and action Home Office regulations in respect of employing foreign nationals.



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